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CONTENTS

NATO: Allies concerned about strains in alliance.

25X1

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Next 2 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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NATO: THE NATO ALLIES ARE EXPRESSING INCREASING DISSATISFACTION WITH THE STATE OF THE ALLIANCE IN THE WAKE OF THE CONTINUING MIDDLE EAST CRISIS.

WITH FRANCE TAKING THE LEAD, THE ALLIES AT A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL AND AT AN IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING LUNCHEON ON 26 OCTOBER EXPRESSED STRONG CRITICISM OVER THE ALLEGED US FAILURE TO CONSULT AND INFORM NATO ADEQUATELY ABOUT ITS MIDDLE EAST INITIATIVES. THE ALLIES SAW CONSULTATION AS PARTICULARLY VITAL IN A SITUATION IN WHICH THEY WERE BEING ASKED TO SUPPORT US ACTIONS AND TO UNDERTAKE PARALLEL ACTIONS OF THEIR OWN IN THE FORM OF REPRESENTATIONS TO MOSCOW. THE ISSUE ALSO ASSUMED PARTICULAR URGENCY IN THE ALLIED VIEW BECAUSE THE US MILITARY ALERT AFFECTED TROOPS STATIONED IN THE NATO AREA AND COULD THEREFORE HAVE HAD CONSEQUENCES FOR ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS.

ALTHOUGH SEVERAL OF THE ALLIES--NOTABLY THE DUTCH AND THE BRITISH--EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING FOR THE SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF THE US, THERE WAS WIDESPREAD SUPPORT FOR THE THESIS THAT CONSULTATIONS ARE A NECESSARY PREREQUISITE FOR THE KIND OF SOLIDARITY REQUESTED BY WASHINGTON. PARIS RAISED THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE US WOULD, IN A TIME OF CRISIS, "SEEK A CLOSER CONSULTATION WITH THE SOVIET UNION THAN WITH ITS ALLIES." SEVERAL ALLIANCE MEMBERS JOINED FRANCE IN CALLING FOR DISCUSSION OF A CODE OF ACTION WITH RESPECT TO CRISES OUTSIDE THE TREATY AREA.

ALTHOUGH THE PRESTIGIOUS NEWSPAPER LE MONDE IS OVERLY BLEAK IN PREDICTING THAT THE CRISIS HAS DEALT A "FATAL BLOW" TO THE YEAR OF EUROPE AND TO A REVITALIZATION OF THE ATLANTIC COMMUNITY, EVENTS OF THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS HAVE EXACERBATED EXISTING DIFFERENCES OVER TRADE, MONETARY REFORM, DEFENSE BURDEN SHARING, SECURITY, AND THE COURSE OF DETENTE. FEARS OF ALLEGED US-SOVIET COLLUSION ON ISSUES VITAL TO EUROPE HAVE LONG LAIN CLOSE TO THE SURFACE. ON TOP OF THAT, THE EUROPEANS HAVE HAD TO FACE UP TO THEIR OWN INABILITY TO INFLUENCE A SITUATION THAT THREATENS THEIR ENERGY SUPPLIES AND THEIR STAKE IN EAST-WEST DETENTE.

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29 Oct 73

Central Intelligence Bulletin

3

ONE RESULT OF THIS LATEST STRAIN BETWEEN THE US
AND THE WEST EUROPEANS MAY BE A STIFFENING OF RESIST-
ANCE TO US DESIRES ON A NUMBER OF PENDING ISSUES.
THE FRENCH ALREADY HAVE SUGGESTED THAT US ACTIONS
DURING THE CRISIS HAVE CALLED INTO QUESTION THE ON-
GOING WORK ON A NEW ATLANTIC DECLARATION THAT WOULD
EMPHASIZE THE VALUE OF CONSULTATION.

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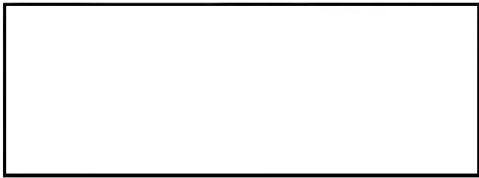
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